

**REMARKS**

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the application are respectfully requested in view of the amendments and remarks herewith. The present amendment is being made to facilitate prosecution of the application.

Claims 1-10 are pending in this application. Claims 1 and 6 have been amended. Support for this amendment is provided throughout the specification as originally filed. No new matter has been introduced by this amendment. It is submitted that these claims, as originally presented, were in full compliance with the requirements 35 U.S.C. §112. Changes to claims are not made for the purpose of patentability within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §101, §102, §103, or §112. Rather, these changes are made simply for clarification and to round out the scope of protection to which Applicants are entitled.

Claims 1-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 6,018,363 to Horii in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,256,068 to Takada, et al.

Independent claim 1 now recites in part as follows:

“...a preprocessing circuit comprising (i) means for generating signals based on output from each line in the image pickup element and for outputting the same ...

a brightness processing circuit which receives the outputted signals from the generating means and performs brightness processing thereon;”

It is respectfully submitted that the combination of Horii and Takada as applied by the Examiner does not disclose the above-recited features. Therefore, independent claim 1 is believed to be distinguishable from the applied combination of Horii and Takada.

For reasons similar to or somewhat similar to those described above with regard to claim 1, independent claim 6 is believed to be distinguishable from the applied combination of Horii and Takada.

Claims 2-5 and 7-10 depend from one of claims 1 and 6, and, due to such dependency, are believed to be distinguishable from the applied combination of Horii and Takada for at least the reasons previously described.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the rejection of claims 1-10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn.

In the event, that the Examiner disagrees with any of the foregoing comments concerning the disclosures in the cited prior art, it is requested that the Examiner indicate where, in the reference or references, there is the basis for a contrary view.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that all of the claims in this application are patentable and Applicant respectfully requests early passage to issue of the present application.

Please charge any fees that may be needed and not paid herein, and credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

Respectfully submitted,  
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